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## OUR FRIEND THE GOVERNOR.

WE were bound for Madras direct, with liberty to call at the Cape. Madeira, with its balm-breathing atmosphere and sunny clime, had long since been left astern. The warm sunshine, genial breezes, clear skies, and deep-blue waters of the tropics, wherein our gallant craft was wont to 'steal silently on her course,' were to us but as pleasant memories of the past, the more to be regretted from the chilly reception we experienced from the keen and cutting blasts that too soon proclaimed the inhospitality of those dreary regions of the far south, whither we were slowly progressing. The change was anything but agreeable, especially when we found ourselves driven a long way out of our course by a succession of south-easterly winds. However, at this juncture, when every one on board was in despair from the tedium and monotony of a passage that was becoming absolutely insupportable, the old adage of 'it's an ill wind that blows nobody good' was verified, in a way that was both agreeable to ourselves, as well as beneficial to the worthy individual whose strange history forms the subject of the present paper. How this was brought about was briefly as follows:

As was then frequently the case, we were one afternoon beating under double-reefed topsails against a strong south-easterly gale. A heavy sea was running. Dark masses of portentous-looking clouds swept rapidly across the sky, apparently pausing in their aerial flight for the purpose of warning us of the coming gale, of which they were the precursors. Still the old craft staggered on, and rolled and pitched, and lurched through the seething waters, in defiance of the storm, which momentarily increased in force, and the waves in size. It was a cheerless scene; and, save the officer of the watch, who paced the poop in gloomy meditation, and a few old salts who varied their pleasant occupation of knotting yarns under the lee of the weather-bulwarks, by skilfully dodging the little catarracts that occasionally invaded their retreat, not a soul was visible on deck.

Between decks, everything was equally uninviting, and not the least, the close stifling atmosphere inseparable from closed ports and hatches. Round the solitary steerage-lanterns, whose oscillating rays dimly revealed the long and dreary perspective of cabin bulkheads, which, at every roll and lurch, creaked and moaned a melancholy discord to the shrill but musical treble of the gear aloft, were grouped a few of the more adventurous of the passengers, who, weary of the confinement of their cabins, determined to shew themselves on deck, and brave the fury of the elements.

Thither also the present writer repaired, and in their congenial society awaited the arrival of his respected commander, with whom, as midshipman of the watch, he had the honour of an invitation to dine that afternoon. Seven bells were struck: as the last sound floated away to leeward, the portly form of the captain emerged from the hatchway, and the hitherto almost deserted decks suddenly assumed a most animated appearance. Crowds of cuddy servants, headed by their chief, the steward, hurried to and fro, laden with the good things our gallant host had provided; the prospect of enjoying them being enhanced by our hearing him give the order to the officer of the watch to 'let her fall off four points, and round in the weather-braces.' During the execution of this most welcome command, we entered the dining-cabin, which, to our gratification, was graced by the presence of some of the fairer portion of our fellow-voyagers, whose appearance was to be attributed to the late desirable change. At the conclusion of the banquet, and after the usual toast of 'absent friends' had been done justice to, Captain Soanso begged to propose as the next one, 'Our friend the governor.' This was also duly responded to by some, under the impression that it referred to their mutual friend at Madras, and by others in happy unconsciousness as to whom the honour was intended for.

'That you may not be under an erroneous impression,' said the captain, 'I must inform you that the social position of my governor is neither so high, nor his seat of government so distant as the personage you imagine.'

'Who is he then?' inquired Major-general Mango, leisurely sipping his glass of port. 'I thought you intended the compliment for my friend Sir Harry.'

'By no means, general,' replied the commander; 'I have not the honour of so distinguished an acquaintance. But to satisfy your curiosity, I may as well tell you that we are now steering a direct course for my old friend's seat of government, which is about 150 miles distant; and if the wind stands, I hope, in the course of to-morrow morning, to have the pleasure of introducing you all to Corporal Glass, the governor of the island of Tristan d'Acunha.'

'Dear me, how delightful!' exclaimed several of the ladies, excited at the bare prospect of even a temporary relief to the dreary monotony of their daily existence. 'Do, pray, Captain Soanso, tell us all about him. Is he a real Robinson Crusoe?'

'Almost,' replied the captain, who, in obedience to his fair friends' request, then proceeded: 'Tristan d'Acunha, Nightingale, and Inaccessible Islands, form a group at about an equal distance of thirty miles from each other,

and 1500 miles from the Cape. The two latter are desolate; the former inhabited by a few English, whose advent and subsequent career have quite an air of romance.

'Whilst Napoleon Bonaparte was a prisoner in St Helena, the British government imagining that the French might occupy Tristan d'Acunha, as an intermediate point of communication with that island, determined on frustrating any such intention, by sending a detachment of soldiers from the Cape to garrison the island. When all fear of the escape of Bonaparte was at an end, the men were withdrawn; but several of them, including Glass, who had obtained his discharge, had become so much attached to their island-home, that they begged permission to return to it, and provide for their families, by cultivating good ground without paying rent, and occasionally going out to sea after seals and sea-elephants, and exchanging the skins and oil thus obtained for necessities, with passing ships. Permission being granted, they soon afterwards sailed for their destination, being, by the kindness of their officer, plentifully supplied with all sorts of seed and different kinds of stock wherewith to commence their new undertaking.

'Soon after their arrival at the island, an event occurred which caused the utmost excitement amongst the colonists, and for a time had the effect of considerably increasing their limited society. It was this. One November morning, in the year 1821, a strange-looking craft, of indescribable rig, was observed standing in towards the island. No one could make her out. What could she be? where from? whither bound? severally exclaimed the astonished gazers as the boxlike-looking affair slowly and wearily approached their shores. To be in readiness to have the problem solved, and receive the strangers with the hearty welcome their evident state of exhaustion required, Glass and his companions proceeded to the landing-place, where the distressed mariners soon afterwards arrived. On landing, their tale was soon told. They proved to be a portion of the crew of the *Blenden Hall*, East Indiaman, which had been recently lost on Inaccessible Island during one of those fogs that are so prevalent round its inhospitable shores. The greater portion of her crew and passengers still remained on the island, obtaining a precarious subsistence from the flesh of sea-elephants, seals, penguins, and their eggs, the island being destitute of anything else, with the exception of a small supply of brushwood for firing. Two months after their shipwreck, a boat, or rather a case, was formed of the planks of the wreck, for the purpose of going to Tristan d'Acunha to obtain assistance. Six of the crew embarked in her, but were never heard of afterwards. A second boat of a similar description was then built, which, as it will have been seen, was more fortunate in the perilous undertaking, and arrived safely at Tristan d'Acunha after a weary and dangerous pull of thirty miles.

'On hearing the foregoing account, Glass gallantly determined to effect the rescue of the forlorn party, and without delay launched two of his whale-boats, and with a good supply of bread, butter, milk, and other necessities, started with his companions on their humane expedition. After three trips, in which they ran the greatest danger of being swamped or blown away to sea, Glass had the satisfaction of bringing off the whole party, and landing them in his sea-girt home, where they received the utmost attention during the remainder of their stay. Here the united community arranged the marriage of one of the seamen of the *Blenden Hall* with a young maid-servant of one of the colonists, who determined on remaining on the island and sharing the fortunes of its governor.

'For several years after this occurrence, nothing worthy of note disturbed the monotonous quiet of

their lives. Their families increased, and their stock thrived and multiplied. They generally have a good supply of corn when the harvest turns out favourably, and an abundance of very large and fine potatoes. For a supply of clothes and many other necessities, the islanders are entirely dependent on passing ships. So you may imagine, ladies and gentlemen,' continued the captain, 'with what joy an Indianman full of passengers is welcomed in that distant part of her majesty's dominions, and how thankfully the most trifling gift is appreciated by these worthy people.'

Captain Soans having brought his narrative to a close, the dinner-party soon afterwards dispersed, profoundly impressed with the necessity of a cordial co-operation with our gallant host in his kindly plans for ameliorating the somewhat desolate condition of the poor islanders.

Great was the commotion when the captain's intention became publicly known. The news flew through the ship like wild-fire. Nowhere was the excitement more intense than in the midshipmen's berth, and on no one had the intelligence a more surprising effect than on Bobstay, our junior youngster, who, having formed a romantic attachment for Elizabeth, the pretty lady's-maid, as a matter of course proposed an elopement to the land of the free, which, however, was most prudently negatived by the fair lady herself.

'Eight bells, there: come, bear a hand; and turn out, Harry—there's land ahead!' sung out one of my mesmates the next morning at the early hour of four.

Under the peculiar circumstances of the case, one jump from my hammock landed me on deck; a second, into my blanket-trousers; and a third, up the main-ladder to the upper-deck, where the tall conical form of the island of Tristan d'Acunha—rising some 800 feet above the level of the sea—could be plainly seen, looming like some monster phantom through the cold gray of the early morning light. During the night, the wind had considerably decreased, and the ship was running down towards the island under all plain sail. As the hours flew by, and the sun rose, and shone on the then tranquil and glittering sea, the scene was one of the most intense interest; and as we lessened our distance, the markings of the island became more and more distinct. Perpendicular cliffs, burned gray and red by an extinct volcano, rose to an immense height above the sea, and then inclined inwards, covered with wood; only to rise again bare and sloping to the apex of the mountain, which was capped with a cloud as white as the snow beneath. Innumerable sea-birds, from the little petrel to the stately albatross, floated round the summits of the lofty cliffs; the huge wings of the latter apparently motionless, yet swift as the 'arrow's flight,' as the bird glided through the aerial space towards its wild retreat in the inaccessible crevices of the rocks of the island.

As we rapidly advanced on our course, we could plainly see, by the aid of our glasses, numerous seals and sea-otters basking and playing on the ledges of rocks at the base of the cliffs, where, in close contiguity, gamboled those shapeless masses, with almost human faces, known as sea-elephants. It was an exciting scene, and everybody was on deck enjoying the pleasant change attendant on a smooth sea and fine weather. Passengers were everywhere busy with their Dollonds, and asking innumerable questions of those who had previously visited the locality, the replies being scarcely heeded, as fresh novelties came crowding one after another.

Presently, a wreath of smoke was seen rising from a point of low land, and floating away in wreathy volumes to leeward.

'There goes the bonfire!' exclaimed the captain. 'We shall soon see the island-boat coming out from the land.'

'Do they usually make this kind of signal?' inquired one of the passengers.

'Invariably,' replied the captain. 'Whenever a vessel heaves in sight, the islanders are always on the alert; and to attract attention, whenever a ship is near enough to see it, they set fire to a large heap of brush-wood, constantly kept in readiness for the purpose.'

'Here comes the boat!' exclaimed several voices, as a handsome whale-boat, manned with four sturdy rowers, was observed dashing out from the land, and pulling rapidly in the direction of the ship.

'Round her to, and shorten sail, Mr Bowline: we will not venture in any further,' said the commander, as we opened the point, on which was proudly waving the Union-jack, and saw the white surf rolling in on the landing-place, though it was comparatively calm outside.

As the ship came up sluggishly in the wind, dragging through the dense mass of sea-weed that surrounds the island, she quickly felt its force, which was not so perceptible while running. Sail was then reduced to the top-sails, jib, and spanker, for the weather round these islands is dangerous and deceitful in the extreme. At one moment, a ship may be sailing with scarcely enough of wind to fill her sails; and the next, a puff will come down the mountain, and carry everything by the board, unless precaution be taken in time. During our visit, the wind happened to be light while we lay-to off the island, and the barometer was very high; but we had scarcely left it, when a gale came on suddenly from the northward, with the usual accompaniments of a heavy sea and thick rainy weather.

In the meanwhile, the state-barge for the nonce, containing the governor, came alongside. On reaching the quarter-deck, both himself and comrades were received with a hearty welcome by every one who had the pleasure of a personal introduction. Glass was a stout, hearty-looking man, and appeared rejoiced to see us. Through the liberality of the passengers, he was presented with a good stock of clothes, blankets, and books, our kind-hearted captain adding a fine calf, and various sorts of grain for seed, besides other stores too numerous to mention. It appeared on inquiry that a large increase in the population had taken place since the captain's last visit; the number now amounting to forty-one, exclusive of the governor's son, who was absent on his travels.

The interchange of presents having taken place—that from the island being a magnificent pig, one of the numerous wild ones that luxuriate along its weed-bound shores, a leg of which, by the by, fell to the share of our hungry mess—an expedition to the shore was determined on, which, with the exception of the ladies, was accompanied by the whole of the passengers.

Under the skilful pilotage of the governor in person, a rather fatiguing pull through the mass of tangled sea-weed soon brought the party to Falmouth Bay, where a landing was effected without difficulty. Ours being the first Indianman that had called at the island for four years, the advent of so large a party caused considerable bustle amongst the delighted inhabitants, especially when it became known that a public ceremony, unprecedented in the annals of that solitary and distant spot, was about to take place.

After a pleasant stroll through the settlement, where every house was open with the most lavish hospitality, and a minute inspection of the live-stock, which amounted to fifty head of cattle, nearly a hundred sheep, besides pigs and poultry *ad infinitum*, the inhabitants were assembled in the presence of one of the passengers, who, being a clergyman, took advantage of the opportunity to baptise twenty individuals of both sexes, from the infant of a few months old to the youth of eighteen. After an impressive address, which was listened to with great attention, a baptismal

register was made out, and delivered to Glass, as a lasting memorial of this important era in the uneventful history of these primitive people, the younger portion of whom had never even seen a clergyman before.

At the close of the service, as if in honour of the occasion, the boom of a gun from our gallant ship was borne across the water. From the lowering appearance of the distant horizon, we were not very far wrong in interpreting it as a signal from Mr Bowline, who was evidently getting impatient at the delay. Even the old craft herself appeared to sympathise with her chief officer, and as if in deprecation of the danger of a more protracted stay in that wild locality, anticipated her departure by a series of low courtesies in a long farewell to its iron-bound coasts. Accordingly, shortly afterwards, the party embarked, and after a lengthened farewell, left their new-made friends to their pristine solitude. And with a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, the little flotilla struck out for its destination, which it reached in safety shortly afterwards. A quarter of an hour elapsed, and the old craft was staggering along under as much sail as she could carry to a freshening gale, which soon carried her far from our friend the governor and his lonely isle.

#### HOW TO FILL YOUR BASKET.

How? Why, there are many ways.

The editor, for instance, as he sits at his desk poring over the voluminous manuscripts kindly proffered to him by aspiring poets, novelists, or moralists, discriminates between the suitable and unsuitable; and the result is, that the former are placed in the printer's hands, while the latter, if not returned, get into basket.

How? The rag-picker could answer the question, by informing us that *his* only chance is to be astir before the busy world has doffed its night-cap, that he may pick his rags in peace, and be sure to fill his basket.

The basket we allude to at present, however, is the *angler's* basket. Angling was a mania of ours in the olden time, and we laughed in our sleeve at those of our brethren who were content with a creel of medium size. We equipped ourselves likewise with flies of every hue, bait-hooks of every size, rods of the most ingenious workmanship, and we would not like to say how many spare tops; pocket-books with elaborate interiors, capable of containing tackle for a ten years' residence in Norway, pirns, lines, and gut exhaustless; and with some dozen casts—each fly differing from its neighbour—wound round our white beaver; and so we would take our journey northward, inwardly resolved to leave an immortal line of glory behind us wherever our piscatorial steps should stray. Strange, however, our success was never commensurate with our preparations; we had miscalculated the season, taken the river at its worst time, were harassed by others pertinaciously whipping the water a hundred yards further down the stream, or had failed to strike the precise infinitesimal degree of shade of the flies on the water that day. We never failed, in short, to find an ingenious excuse; and as we drew in our chair towards the fire in the snug parlour of the 'Gordon Arms,' to describe our sport to others of a similar persuasion, we blessed those *never-failing* apologies—thunder in the air, white clouds; *et cetera*: the clearness of the water. 'If,' exclaimed *et cetera* him, 'those white clouds had but cleared off, how glorious, the fine half-pounders have risen to our "Professo."

Angling having been, as we said, a mania of ours, well do we remember how tedious was the month of April, and how often, whilst busied in our dusky counting-house in the city, recollections of that



glorious week in May last year would come over us; how often, too, we permitted the thrilling anticipation of our week's holiday in the north, not yet enjoyed, to blend with our anxieties respecting the money-market, or dealings in the Corn Exchange!

May arrived; we bade, alas! too short an adieu to our companionable ledgers and cash-books; and year after year, about the beginning of May, we were the envy of our brother-clerks for a whole fortnight.

We now find that nothing but—we must out with it—*sheer ignorance* was the reason why we never filled our basket! And we have lately received a complete solution of the why and wherefore: the truth is, that the generality of man was, up to the year 1857, devoid of the true secret of filling his basket with—trout!

Thanks to Mr Stewart, we have now before us a neat, handy little three-and-sixpenny volume, *The Practical Angler, or the Art of Trout-fishing, more Particularly Applied to Clear Water*,\* containing certain hints and rules, which, had we known them when sojourning at the 'Gordon Arms' in those days, must, we are positive, have lent us the power of filling even our large basket, and saved us from resorting to the apologies of 'thunder in the air' and 'clear water'!

But it is our firm belief that neither we, nor any one else, ever dreamed of the possibility of killing fifteen or twenty pounds' weight of trout per diem, in a clear running stream. As for ourselves, we might fish ever so assiduously, and follow the course of the river for miles, casting our large gaudy flies far out on the stream, and following their motions with eager eye, without catching more than a couple of dozen by dinner-time. But then we erred in fishing down, since our intended prey is always looking up; we erred in using large gaudy flies; we erred in casting a long line. Mr Stewart's long and careful experience has taught him, and he has taught us, that we should have fished up instead of down; that our large gaudy flies ought to have been left behind us in the 'Golden Perch,' and small, sparsely dressed ones used instead. He further informs us, and we feel intuitively that he is correct, that the speckled tenants of Yarrow or Tweed would have been lured, in spite of their teeth, towards a wood-cock wing with a single turn of a red hackle, dressed with yellow silk; that an able supporter would have been found in a hare-lug body, with a corn-bunting or chaffinch wing, and several other equally killing flies which he describes. Our authority, for we may swear by him, also places side by side with those the black spider, the red spider, and the dun spider!

Here is food for the fishes, simply prepared, without show, and tied on to thin and transparent gut; and there at present lie in our reasonably sized pocket-book—our last purchase—half-a-dozen of each of the above, dubbed by the hands of the Practical Angler himself, and presented to us along with his book.

We now see clearly, where all was mystery before, why we lost so many trout—and we were always sure they were the largest—when angling in the Tweed. We were somewhat proud in those days of our dexterity in throwing a long line, and of our management of a sixteen-foot rod; but now our pride has had a sad fall, since we learn that by the use of a short ten-foot rod, moderately stiff, with a short line, we might have doubled, perhaps quadrupled, our 'take;' and joined to this, had we but fished up, used the wood-cock-wings, dotterel-wings, or black and dun spiders, keeping all the while out of sight of our wary prey, what a pleasing load might we not have borne to the Gordon Arms—how patronisingly we should have cheered our less successful brethren—what glorious accounts imparted to our holiday-looking-forward-to brother-clerks in the city!

Let not the reader imagine from the foregoing that

our hero's forte lies in fly-fishing alone, or that he has tested his skill upon one or two streams at the most; our angling friends have only to refer to his little book to find that he has made observations from many a stream and loch; that he has gained also useful hints from the most successful professional and amateur fishers of the day, and that he has not failed to turn them to account for the benefit of the angling world. His experience has taught him that successful anglers have ever been keen observers. We never were keen observers in the days we have alluded to, but are now willing and ready to add as much as we can of that indispensable to the other qualities of an angler—namely, quickness of eye, energy, and boundless perseverance; so that we may hope some fine day to come home, as well as Mr Stewart, with our fifteen dozen and our basket full.

We will not dwell longer upon this, a favourite theme, but will take the opportunity of remarking, that when our friends have carefully perused *The Practical Angler*, and after that, whether they take the train to the north or to the south, it will be their own fault if they do not know how to fill their basket.

We shall conclude with an extract shewing the practical style in which this little work is written; and that the extract may be universally useful, it shall contain a complete angler's calendar, beginning with the present month: 'In the beginning of May it is of little use starting before eight o'clock in the morning, as the weather is generally cold; if the weather is warm, however, trout will take an hour or two earlier. When the waters are clear, the angler should commence with the creeper, and continue using it till he sees the take has commenced, when he should at once change to the fly, and make the most of his time. At this season, the take lasts longer than at any other, and if the day is favourable, the angler may kill the required quantity in a few hours in the forenoon. During the afternoon—that is to say, from two or three o'clock till six or seven—the minnow will frequently be found the best; and a very good plan is to fish up with the creeper and fly, and then back over the same ground with the minnow. If neither the creeper, fly, nor minnow will take, recourse must be had to the worm; but this is rarely the case; and unless on the occasion of a full flood, the angler may never have occasion to use the worm till the end of June. When the waters are in full flood, recourse must be had to the worm; and when they are rising, or again falling, from the time that the particles of the mud begin to subside, until the waters become of a dark porter colour, the minnow will be found very deadly. The worm and the minnow should be used the whole season through when the waters are in the states just mentioned; but when they become of a dark porter colour, the lures appropriate to the season come into play, and in May, in such a case, reliance can always be placed upon the fly.

About the middle of the month, the May-fly makes its appearance, and with it the angler will have no difficulty in filling his basket. In streams where the May-fly is not to be had, the angler should use worm and minnow in the morning; and whenever he observes the trout rising at the natural insect, change to the fly. The minnow will again be found effective in the evening. Even in streams where May-flies abound, minnow or worm will sometimes take better than they do early in the morning; and if the weather is very dark and stormy, the minnow will frequently be found most effective all day.

When the May-flies have been two or three weeks on the water, or about the middle of June, they are not to be found in such numbers; the trout also do not take them so readily, and filling even a twelve-pound basket becomes rather difficult. The trout have given

\* A. & C. Black, Edinburgh. 1857.

up taking fly readily, and have not yet begun to take worm; they appear to be resting after the high feeding they have enjoyed for the last six weeks. Loch-fishing being now in its prime, the angler would do well to give it a trial, as he will not lose much by a ten days' absence from the rivers. In these, the worm and minnow in the morning, the fly in the forenoon, and the minnow and fly in the evening, will be found the best means of filling a basket; and in small waters and hill-burns, trout will now take the worm readily.

'From the middle to the end of June, worm-fishing commences; and from this period to the end of July large basketful of trout may be depended upon, no matter what the state of weather or water. A good arrangement for a day's trouting at this season is to start very early in the morning—the earlier the better—and fish down a few miles with the minnow, and then fish back again with the worm; or if the angler has not the gift of early rising, he may start about breakfast-time, taking his dinner with him, and fish up with the worm, and down again with the minnow in the evening. If the weather is dark and stormy, the minnow will frequently be found most deadly during the whole day.

'About the beginning of August, another change begins to take place in the inclinations of the trout. Unless the weather is showery, or particularly favourable, they will not take the worm readily; and frequently only take it for an hour or so in the heat of the day. There is also a visible falling off in the size of the trout caught with it—a sure sign with any kind of fishing that it is approaching a termination. Nor will the minnow, unless the streams are swollen, aid the angler in his emergency; there is nothing for it but to have recourse to the more backward districts and smaller waters.

'About the end of August, trout begin to take the fly freely, and continue doing so all through September; and reliance can generally be placed upon it, particularly in coloured water: should it fail, recourse must be had to some hill-burn, where the worm will always be found effective.

'By the beginning of October, all the spawning trout are out of condition; the small ones, however, which do not spawn, afford very good diversion until far on in the month, by which time even they are quite unworthy of the attention of the sportsman.'

## THE WAR-TRAIL:

### A ROMANCE.

#### CHAPTER LXIV.—A LILLIPUTIAN FOREST.

On resuming the trail, I moved with lighter spirit. I had three sources of gratulation. The peril of the flood was past—she was not drowned. The wolves were thrown off—the dangerous rapid had deterred them; on the other side their footprints were no longer found. Thirdly, the steed had slackened his pace. After climbing the bank, he had set off in a rapid gait, but not at a gallop.

'He's been pacin' hyar!' remarked Garey, as soon as his eyes rested upon the tracks.

'Pacing?'

I knew what was meant by this; I knew that gait peculiar to the prairie-horse, fast but smooth as the amble of a palfrey. His rider would scarcely perceive the gentle movement; her torture would be less.

Perhaps, too, no longer frightened by the fierce pursuers, the horse would come to a stop. His wearied limbs would admonish him, and then—Surely he could not have gone much further?

We too were wearied, one and all; but these pleasing conjectures beguiled us from thinking of our toil, and we advanced more cheerfully along the trail.

Alas! it was my fate to be the victim of alternate hopes and fears. My new-sprung joy was short-lived, and fast fled away.

We had gone but a few hundred paces from the river, when we encountered an obstacle, that proved not only a serious barrier to our progress, but almost brought our tracking to a termination.

This obstacle was a forest of oaks, not *giant oaks*, as these famed trees are usually designated, but the very reverse—a forest of *dwarf oaks* (*Quercus nana*). Far as the eye could reach extended this singular wood, in which no tree rose above thirty inches in height! Yet was it no thicket—no under-growth of shrubs—but a true forest of oaks, each tree having its separate stem, its boughs, its lobed leaves, and its bunches of brown acorns.

'Shin oak,' cried the trappers, as we entered the verge of this miniature forest.

'Wagh!' exclaimed Rube, in a tone of impatience, 'hyur's bother. 'Ee may all get out o' yur saddles an rest yur critters: we'll hev to crawl hyur.'

And so it resulted. For long weary hours we followed the trail, going not faster than we could have crawled upon our hands and knees. The tracks of the steed were plain enough, and in daylight could have been easily followed; but the little oaks grew close and regular as if planted by the hand of man; and through their thick foliage the moonlight scarcely penetrated. Their boughs almost touched each other, so that the whole surface lay in dark shadow, rendering it almost impossible to make out the hoof-prints. Here and there, a broken branch or a bunch of tossed leaves—their under-sides shining glaucous in the moonlight—enabled us to advance at a quicker rate; but as the horse had passed gently over the ground, these 'signs' were few and far between.

For long fretful hours, we toiled through the 'shin-oak' forest, our heads far overtopping its tallest trees! We might have fancied that we were threading our way through some extended nursery. The trail led directly across its central part; and ere we had reached its furthest verge, the moon's rays were mingling with the purple light of morning.

Soon after the 'forest opened,' the little dwarfs grew further apart—here scattered thinly over the ground, there disposed in clumps or miniature groves—until at length the sward of the prairie predominated.

The trouble of the trackers was at an end. The welcome light of the sun was thrown upon the trail, so that they could lift it as fast as we could ride; and, no longer hindered by brake or bush, we advanced at a rapid rate across the prairie.

Over this ground the steed had also passed rapidly. He had continued to pace for some distance, after emerging from the shin-oak forest; but all at once, as we could tell by his tracks, he had bounded off again, and resumed his headlong gallop.

What had started him afresh? We were at a loss to imagine; even the prairie-men were puzzled.

Had wolves again attacked him, or some other enemy? No; nor one nor other. It was a green prairie over which he had gone, a smooth sward of mezquite-grass; but there were spots where the growth was thin—patches nearly bare—and these were

softened by the rain. Even the light paw of a wolf would have impressed itself in such places, sufficiently to be detected by the lynx-eyed men of the plains. The horse had passed since the rain had ceased falling. No wolf, or other animal, had been after him.

Perhaps he had taken a start of himself, freshly affrighted at the novel mode in which he was ridden—still under excitement from the rough usage he had received, and from which he had not yet cooled down; perhaps the barbed points of the cohetes rankled in his flesh, acting like spurs; perhaps some distant sound had led him to fancy the hooting mob, or the howling wolves, still coming at his heels; perhaps—

An exclamation from the trackers, who were riding in the advance, put an end to these conjectures. Both had pulled up, and were pointing to the ground. No words were spoken—none needed. We all read with our eyes an explanation of the renewed gallop.

Directly in front of us, the sward was cut and scored by numerous tracks. Not four, but four hundred hoof-prints were indented in the turf—all of them fresh as the trail we were following—and amidst these the tracks of the steed, becoming intermingled, were lost to our view.

'A drove of wild-horses,' pronounced the guides at a glance. They were the tracks of unshod hoofs, though that would scarcely have proved them wild. An Indian troop might have ridden past without leaving any other sign; but these horses had not been mounted, as the trappers confidently alleged; and among them were the hoof-marks of foals and half-grown colts, which proved the drove to be a *caballada* of mustangs.

At the point where we first struck their tracks they had been going in full speed, and the trail of the steed converged until it closed with theirs at an acute angle.

'Ye-es,' drawled Rube, 'I see how 'tis. They've been skecart at the awkward look o' the hoss, an hev put off. See! thur's his tracks on the top o' all o' theirn: he's been runnin arter 'em. Thur!' continued the tracker, as we advanced—'thur he hez overtuk some o' 'em. See! thur! the vamin's hev scattered right an left! Hyur agin, they've galloped thegither, some ahint, an some afore him. Wag! I guess they know him now, an ain't any more afeerd o' him. See thur! he's in the thick o' the drove.'

Involuntarily I raised my eyes, fancying from these words that the horses were in sight; but no; the speaker was riding forward, leaning over in his saddle, with look fixed upon the ground. All that he had spoken he had been reading from the surface of the prairie—from hieroglyphics to me unintelligible, but to him more easily interpreted than the page of a printed book.

I knew that what he was saying was true. The steed had galloped after a drove of wild-horses; he had overtaken them; and at the point where we now were, had been passing along in their midst!

Dark thoughts came crowding into my mind at this discovery—another shadow across my heart. I perceived at once a new situation of peril for my betrothed—new, and strange, and awful.

I saw her in the midst of a troop of neighing wild-horses—stallions with fiery eyes and red steaming nostrils; these perhaps angry at the white steed, and jealous of his approach to the *manada*; in mad rage rushing upon him with open mouth and yellow glistening teeth; rearing around and above him, and striking down with deadly desperate hoof—O it was a horrid apprehension, a fearful fancy!

Yet, fearful as it was, it proved to be the exact

shadow of a reality. As the mirage refracts distant objects upon the retina of the eye, so some spiritual mirage must have thrown upon my mind the image of things that were real. Not distant, though then unseen—not distant was the real. Rapidly I ascended another swell of the prairie, and from its crest beheld almost the counterpart of the terrible scene that my imagination had conjured up!

Was it a dream? was it still fancy that was cheating my eyes? No; there was the wild-horse drove; there the rearing, screaming stallions; there the white steed in their midst—he too rearing erect—there upon his back—

'O God! look down in mercy—save her! save her!'

#### CHAPTER LXV.

##### SCATTERING THE WILD STALLIONS.

Such rude appeal was wrung from my lips by the dread spectacle on which my eyes rested.

I scarcely waited the echo of my words; I waited not the counsel of my comrades, but, plunging deeply the spur, galloped down the hill in the direction of the drove.

There was no method observed, no attempt to keep under cover. There was not time either for caution or concealment. I acted under instantaneous impulse, and with but one thought—to charge forward, scatter the stallions, and, if yet in time, save her from those hurling heels and fierce glittering teeth.

If yet in time—ay, such provisory parenthesis was in my mind at the moment. But I drew hope from observing that the steed kept a ring cleared around him: his assailants only threatened at a distance.

Had he been alone, I might have acted with more caution, and perhaps have thought of some stratagem to capture him. As it was, stratagem was out of the question; the circumstances required speed.

Both trappers and rangers, acting under like impulse with myself, had spurred their horses into a gallop, and followed close at my heels.

The drove was yet distant. The wind blew from them—a brisk breeze. We were half-way down the hill, and still the wild-horses neither heard, saw, nor scented us.

I shouted at the top of my voice: I wished to startle and put them to flight. My followers shouted in chorus; but our voices reached not the quarrelling *caballada*.

A better expedient suggested itself: I drew my pistol from its holster, and fired several shots in the air.

The first would have been sufficient. Its report was heard, despite the opposing wind; and the mustangs, affrighted by the sound, suddenly forsook the encounter. Some bounded away at once; others came wheeling around us, snorting fiercely, and tossing their heads in the air; a few galloped almost within range of our rifles, and then uttering their shrill neighing, turned and broke off in rapid flight. The steed and his rider alone remained, where we had first observed them!

For some moments he kept the ground, as if bewildered by the sudden scattering of his assailants; but he too must have heard the shots, and perhaps alone divined something of what had caused those singular noises. In the loud concussion, he recognised the voice of his greatest enemy; and yet he stirred not from the spot!

Was he going to await our approach? Had he become tamed?—reconciled to captivity? or was it that we had rescued him from his angry rivals—that he was grateful, and no longer feared us?

Such odd ideas rushed rapidly through my mind as I hurried forward. I had begun to deem it probable that he would stay our approach, and suffer us quietly to recapture him. Alas! I was soon undeceived. I



was still a long way off—many hundred yards—when I saw him rear upward, wheel round upon his hind-feet as on a pivot, and then bound off in determined flight. His shrill scream peeling back upon the breeze, fell upon my ears like the taunt of some deadly foe. It seemed the utterance of mockery and revenge: mockery at the impotence of my pursuit; revenge that I had once made him my captive.

I obeyed the only impulse I could have at such a moment, and galloped after, as fast as my horse could go. I stayed for no consultation with my companions; I had already forged far ahead of them. They were too distant for speech.

I needed not their wisdom to guide me. No plan required conception or deliberation; the course was clear: by speed only could the horse be taken, and his rider saved from destruction—if yet safe.

O the fearfulness of the last reflection! the agony of the doubt!

It was not the hour to indulge in idle anguish; I repressed the emotion, and bent myself earnestly upon the pursuit. I spoke to my brave steed, addressing him by name; I urged him with hands and knees; only at intervals did I inflict the cruel steel upon his ribs.

I soon perceived that he was flagging; I perceived it with increased apprehension for the result. He had worn his saddle too long on the day before, and the wet weary night had jaded him. He had been overwrought, and I felt his weariness, as he galloped with feebler stroke. The prairie-steed must have been fresh in comparison.

But life and death were upon the issue. Her life—perhaps my own. I cared not to survive her. She must be saved. The spur must be plied without remorse: the steed must be overtaken, even if Moro should die!

It was a rolling prairie over which the chase led—a surface that undulated like the billows of the ocean. We galloped transversely to the direction of the 'swells,' that rose one after the other in rapid succession. Perhaps the rapidity with which we were crossing them brought them nearer to each other. To me there appeared no level ground between these land-billows. Up hill and down hill in quick alternation was the manner of our progress—a severe trial upon the girths—a hard killing gallop for my poor horse. But life and death were upon the issue, and the spur must be plied without remorse.

A long cruel gallop—would it never come to an end? would the steed never tire? would he never stop? Surely in time he must become weary? Surely Moro was his equal in strength as in speed?—superior to him in both?

Ah! the prairie-horse possessed a double advantage—he had started fresh—he was on his native ground.

I kept my eyes fixed upon him; not for one moment did I withdraw my glance. A mysterious apprehension was upon me; I feared to look around, lest he should disappear. The souvenirs of the former chase still haunted me; weird remembrances clung to my spirit. I was once more in the region of the supernatural.

I looked neither to the right nor left, but straight before me—straight at the object of my pursuit, and the distance that lay between us. This last I continuously scanned, now with fresh hope, and now again with doubt. It seemed to vary with the ground. At one time, I was nearer, as the descending slope gave me the advantage; but the moment after, the steep declivity retarded the speed of my horse, and increased the intervening distance.

It was with joy I crossed the last swell of the rolling prairie, and beheld a level plain stretching before us. It was with joy I perceived that upon the new ground I was rapidly gaining upon the steed!

And rapidly I continued to gain upon him, until

scarcely three hundred yards were between us. So near was I, that I could trace the outlines of her form—her prostrate limbs—still lashed to the croup—her garments loose and torn—her ankles—her long dark hair dishevelled and trailing to the ground—even her pallid cheek I could perceive, as at intervals the steed tossed back his head to utter his wild taunting neigh.

I was near enough to be heard. I shouted in my loudest voice; I called her by name. I kept my eyes upon her, and with throbbing anxiety listened for a response. I fancied that her head was raised, as though she understood and would have answered me. I could hear no voice, but her feeble cry might have been drowned by the clatter of the hooves.

Again I called aloud—again and again pronouncing her name.

Surely I heard a cry; surely her head was raised from the withers of the horse. I could not be mistaken.

'Thank Heaven, she lives!'

I had scarcely uttered the prayer, when I felt my steed yield beneath me as though he was sinking into the bosom of the earth. I was hurled out of the saddle, and flung head-foremost upon the plain. My horse had broken through the burrow of the prairie marmot, and the false step had brought him with violence to the ground.

I was neither stunned nor entangled by the fall; and in a few seconds had regained my feet, my bridle, and saddle. But as I headed my horse once more toward the chase, the white steed and his rider had passed out of sight.

#### CHAPTER LXVI.

##### LOST IN A CHAPPARAL.

I was chagrined, frantic, and despairing, but not surprised. This time there was no mystery about the disappearance of the steed; the chapparral explained it. Though I no longer saw him, he was yet within hearing. His footfall on the firm ground, the occasional snapping of a dead stick, the whisk of the recoiling branches, all reached my ears as I was remounting.

These sounds guided me, and without staying to follow his tracks, I dashed forward to the edge of the chapparral—at the point nearest to where I heard him moving. I did not pause to look for an opening, but heading in the direction whence came the sounds, I spurred forward into the thicket. Breasting the bushes that reached around his neck, or bounding over them, my brave horse pressed on; but he had not gone three lengths of himself before I recognised the imprudence of the course I was pursuing: I now saw I should have followed the tracks.

I no longer heard the movements of the steed—neither foot-stroke, nor snapping sticks, nor breaking branches. The noise made by my own horse, amid the crackling acacias, drowned every other sound; and so long as I kept in motion, I moved with uncertainty. It was only when I made stop that I could again hear the chase struggling through the thicket; but now the sounds were faint and far distant—growing still fainter as I listened.

Once more I urged forward my horse, heading him almost at random; but I had not advanced a hundred paces, before the misery of uncertainty again impelled me to halt.

This time I listened and heard nothing—not even the recoil of a bough. The steed had either stopped, and was standing silent, or, what was more probable, had gained so far in advance of me that his hoof-stroke was out of hearing.

Half frantic, angered at myself, too much excited for cool reflection, I lanced the sides of my horse, and galloped madly through the thicket.

I rode several hundred yards before drawing bridle, in a sort of desperate hope I might once more bring myself within earshot of the chase.

Again I halted to listen. My recklessness proved of no avail. Not a sound reached my ear: even had there been sounds, I should scarcely have heard them above that issuing from the nostrils of my panting horse; but sound there was none. Silent was the chapparral around me—silent as death; not even a bird moved among its branches.

I felt something like self-execration: my imprudence I denounced over and over. But for my rash haste, I might yet have been upon the trail—perhaps within sight of the object of pursuit. Where the steed had gone, surely I could have followed. Now he was gone I knew not whither—lost—his trail lost—all lost!

To recover the trace of him, I made several casts across the thicket. I rode first in one direction, then in another, but all to no purpose. I could find neither hoof-track nor broken branch.

I next bethought me of returning to the open prairie, there retaking the trail, and following it thence. This was clearly the wisest, in fact, the only course in which there was reason. I should easily recover the trail, at the point where the horse had entered the chapparral, and thence I might follow it without difficulty.

I turned my horse round, and headed him in the direction of the prairie—or rather in what I supposed to be the direction—for this too had become conjecture.

It was not till I had ridden for a half-hour, for more than a mile through glade and bush—not till I had ridden nearly twice as far in the opposite direction—and then to right, and then to left—that I pulled up my broken horse, dropped the rein upon his withers, and sat bent in my saddle under the full conviction that I too was lost!

Lost in the chapparral—that parched and hideous jungle, where every plant that carries a thorn seemed to have place. Around grew *acacias*, *mimosas*, *gleditschias*, *robinias*, *algarobias*—all the thorny legumes of the world; above towered the splendid *fouquieria* with spinous stem; there flourished the 'tornillo' (*prosopis glandulosa*), with its twisted beans; there the 'junco' (*koeleria*), whose very leaves are thorns. There saw I spear-pointed *yuccas* and clawed bromeliads (*agave* and *dasyllirion*); there, too, the universal cactaceæ (*opuntia*, *mammillaria*, *cereus*, and *echinocactus*); even the very grass was thorny—for it was a species of the 'mezquite-grass,' whose knotted culms are armed with sharp spurs!

Through this horrid thicket I had not passed unscathed; my garments were already torn, my limbs were bleeding.

My limbs—and hers?

Of hers alone was I thinking: those fair-proportioned members—those softly rounded arms—that smooth delicate skin—bosom and shoulders bare—the thorn—the scratch—the tear. Oh! it was agony to think!

By action alone might I hope to still my emotions; and once more rousing myself from the lethargy of painful thought, I urged my steed onward through the bushes.

#### CHAPTER LXVII.

##### ENCOUNTER WITH JAVALI.

I had no mark to guide me, either on the earth or in the heavens. I had an indefinite idea that the chase had led westward, and therefore to get back to the prairie, I ought to head towards the east. But how was I to distinguish east from west? In the chapparral both were alike, and so too upon the sky. No sun was visible; the canopy of heaven was of a uniform leaden colour; upon its face were no signs by which the cardinal points could have been discovered.

Had I been in a forest of trees, surrounded by a

northern *sylva*, I could have made out my course. The oak or the elm, the ash-tree or maple, the beech or aycamore—any of them would have been compass sufficient for me; but in that thicket of thorny shrubs I was completely at fault. It was a subtropical flora, or rather a vegetation of the arid desert, to which I was almost a stranger. I knew there were men skilled in the craft of the chapparral, who, in the midst of it, could tell north from south without compass or star. Not I.

I could think of no better mode than to trust to the guidance of my horse. More than once, when lost in the thick forest or on the boundless plain, had I reposed a similar trust in his instincts—more than once had he borne me out of my bewilderment.

But whither could he take me? Back to the path by which we had come? Probably enough, had that path led to a home; but it did not: my poor steed, like myself, had no home. He, too, was a ranger; for years had been flitting from place to place, hundreds, ay, thousands of miles from each other. Long had he forgotten his native stall.

I surmised that if there was water near, his instinct might carry him to that—and much needed it both horse and rider. Should we reach a running stream, it would serve as a guide.

I dropped the rein upon his neck, and left him to his will.

I had already shouted in my loudest voice, in hopes of being heard by my comrades; by none other than them, for what could human being do in such a spot, shunned even by the brute creation? The horned lizard (*agama cornuta*), the ground rattlesnake, the shell-covered armadillo, and the ever-present coyote, alone inhabit these dry jungles; and now and then the javali (*dicotyles torquatus*), feeding upon the twisted legumes of the 'tornillo,' passes through their midst; but even these are rare; and the traveller may ride for scores of miles through the Mexican chapparral without encountering aught that lives and moves. There reigns the stillness of death. Unless the wind be rustling among the pinnate fronds of the acacias, or the unseen locust utters its harsh shrieking amid the parched herbage, the weary wayfarer may ride on, cheered by no other sound than his own voice, or the footfall of his horse.

There was still the chance that my followers might hear me. I knew that they would not stray from the trail. Though they must have been far behind when I entered the chapparral, following the tracks, they would in time be sure to come up.

It was a question whether they would follow mine, or that of the steed. This had not occurred to me before, and I paused to consider it. If the former, then was I wrong in moving onward, as I should only be going from them, and leading them in a longer search. Already had I given them a knot to unravel, my devious path forming a labyrinthine maze.

It was more than probable they would follow me—in the belief that I had some reason for deviating from the trail of the steed, perhaps for the purpose of heading or intercepting him.

This conjecture decided me against advancing further—at least until some time should elapse, enough to allow them to come up with me.

Out of compassion for my hard-breathing horse, I dismounted. At intervals, I shouted aloud, and fired shots from my pistols: after each I listened; but neither shot nor shout reached me in reply. They must be distant indeed, not to hear the report of firearms; for had they heard them, they would have been certain to make answer in a similar manner. All of them carried rifles and pistols.

I began to think it was time they should have reached me. Again I fired several shots; but, as before, echo was the only reply. Perhaps they had



not followed me? perhaps they had kept on upon the trail of the steed, and it might lead them far away, beyond hearing of the reports? perhaps there was not yet time for them to have arrived?

While thus conjecturing, my ears were assailed by the screeching of birds at some distance off. I recognised the harsh notes of the jay, mingling with the chatter of the red cardinal.

From the tones, I knew that these birds were excited by the presence of some animal. Perhaps they were defending their nests against the black snake or the *crotales*.

It might be my followers approaching? it might be the steed—like me, still wandering in the chapparal?

I sprang to my saddle to get a better view, and gazed over the tops of the trees. Guided by the voices of the birds, I soon discovered the scene of the commotion. At some distance off, I saw both jays and cardinals fluttering among the branches, evidently excited by something on the ground beneath them. At the same time I heard strange noises, far louder than the voices of the birds, but could not tell what was causing them. My spirits sank, for I knew they could not be produced either by my comrades or the steed.

It was not far, and I determined to satisfy myself as to what was causing such a commotion in this hitherto silent place. I rode towards the spot, as fast as my horse could make way through the bushes. I was soon satisfied.

Coming out on the edge of a little glade, I became spectator to a strange scene—a battle between the red cougar and a band of *javalis*.

The fierce little boars were 'ringing' the panther, who was fighting desperately in their midst. Several of them lay upon the ground, struck senseless or dead, by the strong paws of the huge cat; but the others, nothing daunted, had completely surrounded their enemy, and were bounding upon him with open mouths, wounding him with their sharp shining tusks.

The scene aroused my hunter instincts, and suddenly unslung my rifle, I set my eye to the sights. I had no hesitation about the selection of my mark—the panther, by all means—and drawing trigger, I sent my bullet through the creature's skull, at once stretching him out in the midst of his assailants.

Three seconds had not elapsed, before I had reason to regret the choice I had made of a victim. I should have let the cougar alone, and either held my fire, or directed it upon one of his urchin-like enemies; for the moment he was *hors de combat*, his assailants became mine—transferring their 'surround' to my horse and myself, with all the savage fierceness they had just exhibited towards the panther!

I had no means of punishing the ungrateful brutes. They had not given me time to reload my rifle before commencing the attack, and my pistols were both empty. My horse, startled by the unexpected assault, as well as by the strange creatures that were making it, snorted and plunged wildly over the ground; but go where he would, a score of the ferocious brutes followed, springing against his sides, and scoring his shanks with their terrible tusks. Well for me I was able to keep the saddle; had I been thrown from it at that moment, I should certainly have been torn to pieces.

I saw no hope of safety but in flight, and spurring my horse, I gave him full rein. Alas! through that tangled thicket the *javalis* could go as fast as he; and after galloping a hundred yards or so, I perceived the whole flock still around me, leaping as fiercely as ever around the limbs of my steed.

The result might have proved awkward enough; but at that moment I heard voices, and saw mounted men breaking through the underwood. They were Stanfield, Quackenboss, and the rest of the rangers.

In another second they were on the ground; and their revolvers, playing rapidly, soon thinned the ranks of the *javalis*, and caused the survivors to retreat grunting and screaming into the thicket.

#### WHAT IS HEROISM?

EVERY tolerably forward school-boy is familiar with a number of stock anecdotes associated with classical names, and illustrative of the heroic virtues, self-sacrifice and fortitude. Many of these *ana* will scarcely bear criticism in point of authenticity; but it is one of the least grateful duties of the historian to withdraw from the domain of presumed reality those dramatic episodes and tableaux with which the Greek and Roman writers enliven the grammar-school instruction. In our boyish days, we learn to venerate the ancient senators, awaiting in their curule-chairs with dignified gravity the intrusion of uncouth invaders. We garner up in our memories the gallantry of Curtius and Cocles, the patriotic integrity of Regulus and Cincinnatus; and we are naturally loath to listen to Niebuhr and Arnold, when they assure us that these, our fancy-men, never had existence save in the imaginations of ballad-singers, or the traditions of an unlettered people; or if they really abode in the flesh, never performed the acts attributed to them. Independently of such 'points' in mythic history, there are no doubt many similar incidents which, though ascribed to historical personages, are nevertheless fictitious. Our ancient friends were extremely partial to narratives of this kind, and in default of a sufficiency of authentic facts, supplied themselves with circumstantial *on dits*. These were repeated from mouth to mouth, until they became, like travellers' tales, a part of the popular belief, and obtained admission to the grave pages of the biographer and historian.

The question, however, whether or not these anecdotes, and others of the same class, were records of actual events, is immaterial to my present purpose; it is enough that they have been handed down from generation to generation, from the old civilisation to the new, and have challenged and received more or less admiration and applause. They picture to us the kind of heroism most in esteem amongst the ancients, and not without honour in later days. Leonidas and his three hundred; Aristides inscribing his own name on the ostracising shell of an illiterate citizen; Arris, by her own death, encouraging her husband to brave a similar fate; the elder Brutus, with a severe justice, scarcely enough tempered with mercy, condemning his own son to death for a trifling breach of military discipline, are instances of the kind to which I allude; and we can trace in them all the stoical and dignified behaviour regarded by the men of those days as the height of human virtue.

If we seek further to determine the main elements which gave to these actions their *éclat*, we shall find them to be an enthusiastic abnegation of self, and a somewhat exaggerated development of a single virtue. The actuating motive, whether patriotism, domestic affection, or a sentiment of honour, prevailed in an unusual degree, raised to the point of enthusiasm by peculiar circumstances of time and place, or peculiar character of mind. It would not be well to detract from the glory or quasi-glory of such exploits, by ascribing them to ignoble motives, or judging them according to the light of an after-age. Every action, however praiseworthy and virtuous in outward seeming, may be accounted for, if we so incline, by consummate hypocrisy, far-sighted selfishness, or immoderate pride. By hypothetical assumptions, we may attribute the public life of Washington to his greed for glory, or of Wilberforce to a puerile love of fame. He must be an intense sceptic in human nature who perversely refers every instance of apparent self-forgetfulness to

concealed self-love. I do not, then, doubt that such actions as I have referred to possessed that species of nobleness claimed for them; at all events, it is upon this assumption that they have been recorded as examples of heroism.

In modern times, illustrations of similar virtue are by no means infrequent, but they do not possess that classical sanction which is so powerful for good or ill, and too often elevates a sophism into a wise saw, and an act of dubious morality into a vaunted exemplar. For instance, a modern Scævola is scarcely entitled to approbation. I willingly admit the deserts of these heroes and heroines; nevertheless, a little consideration will shew, that examples of this type do not exhibit the highest forms of moral grandeur. It is obvious at once, that isolated acts, illustrating an impulsive virtue, and occurring at conjunctures of great emergency, are but doubtful guides to general character. The actors in such scenes are not necessarily so exalted or so high-spirited as we are at first likely to imagine. Wholesale experience has lately shewn that the devotion of soldiery is no rare attribute; and in order to create military heroes, we have only to provide a field of action. Neither are the self-sacrifices of affection peculiar to lofty characters. But there is a heroism of a higher kind, which is often not patent to the world, which requires no grand stage and no dramatic incidents to give it lustre.

Charles Lamb tells an instructive story relating to the culinary discovery of roast-pig. John Chinaman found among the ruins of a house destroyed by fire a sucking-pig beautifully cooked in the course of the conflagration. Being enchanted by the succulent dainty, he proceeded to burn down another house containing another sucking-pig. After considerable destruction of valuable property, a sage friend of John Chinaman pointed out that in order to procure burnt pig, it was not at all essential to burn down a house. With regard to heroism, we are apt to fall into the illogical reasoning of the Celestial epicure, and imagine that great crises are necessary to its development. Enthusiastic British youth, moved by the recital of heroic deeds of ancient or modern times, yearn to become performers of similar exploits: they are filled with regret that their surrounding circumstances are commonplace, that they have no Thermopylæ to defend and no Sebastopol to storm, that there is not the slightest occasion to imitate the Athenians under Themistocles, and embark their household gods. They crave the inducement of a tragic glory and opportunity to create an undying fame by a single effort. But the higher heroism of which I speak, avoids rather than seeks the pomp and circumstance of war and the glare of publicity. It is true that enthusiasm is for the most part respectable. Even when its results are most deplorable, it bears testimony to the moral and religious nature of man. It implies an acting up to principle, and a disregard of immediate selfish considerations. Enthusiasm, no less than laughter, distinguishes man from the lower creation; still, the self-sacrifices to which it impels, are not the *most* noble. We know it is not in moments of excitement that the voice of conscience is most readily heard and obeyed; we know that soldiers, after the first moments of the conflict, customarily lose all sense of danger, are urged on by a wild agitation of the spirits, and make the final assault in almost a state of delirium. The foundation of heroism of this kind is physical courage and common manly sentiment. We know, too, that enthusiasm, in the form of fanaticism, enables men to endure excruciating agonies without a cry: the lamas of Tibet inflict on themselves ghastly wounds; Hindoos suffer themselves to be hooked up by the muscles of the back, and swung round and round in that painful state of suspension, without murmur of complaint. Yet we cannot suppose these men to be braver, or

possessed of higher moral qualities, than the European who groans with the toothache, and is terribly distressed by a simple fracture of the arm.

The truest heroism requires for its exhibition calm reflection and deliberate will, rather than excitement. Instead of the heat of the affray, or the ardour of a mistaken faith, its groundwork is a sense of duty able to contend with conflicting and baser motives. Patient uncomplaining endurance—steady perseverance in overcoming obstacles—conduct always upright in good and evil report, when no human eye may see with commendation, and no human heart respond with sympathy—this is true heroism, and raises its possessor far beyond the ranks of those who plant the standard on a well-won breach. Such heroism as this requires no historical arena; it lies as much within the reach of the man of peace as of the warrior, of the private citizen as of the statesman or sage. If we were to obey the moral law unflinchingly, and learn to labour and wait, we should all be heroes, and earth all hallowed ground. From this point of view, the reflective mind sees more heroism in the endurance of soldiers in the trenches, than in their courage at the assault. From this point of view, the scene of the company of soldiers going down with the *Ocean Monarch* in parade order, with their colonel at their head, strikes us as a greater triumph than that achieved by Leonidas and his three hundred braves; and we recognise in unfortunate wives who come before our police-courts bruised and disfigured by the barbarity of their husbands, and decline to give evidence against them, 'because they are only so when in drink,' the Arriars of modern times. We do wrong, therefore, when we allow stage-effect and brilliant éclat to throw too much into the shade the less obtrusive heroism of private life. If any man feels such accessories to be necessary to the display of his heroic spirit, he may be assured that he is under a wrong impression, and does not possess any such faculty at all. Vanity or ambition may enable him to bear the pains and penalties of such a spirit, and give himself the semblance of a hero; but if he wins the esteem and honour due to such a character, it is by means of false pretences, and the reward so won will assuredly fail to become a recompense in its enjoyment.

#### A PARISIAN LITTERATEUR.

THE voluminous autobiography of Alexandre Dumas is in many respects a very noticeable work, but in none more so than in the minuteness of detail with which it depicts the career of a Parisian Litterateur. If this detail were unmixed with extraneous matter, it would be all the more acceptable. Dumas has been the contemporary of many remarkable literary men and artists—with all of them he has been personally acquainted; with many he has lived on terms of intimacy; and if he had chosen to confine within reasonable limits an account of his relations with these men, his impressions of their works, with the anecdotes and information current in the literary, artistic, musical, and theatrical circles of Paris from the death of Louis XVIII. to the revolution of 1848—when the break-up took place—he would have produced a book not only amusing to his contemporaries at home, and instructive to the public of Europe at large, but a valuable contribution to social history.

Instead of confining himself to this, Alexandre Dumas has been seized with the unfortunate idea of incorporating in his personal memoirs the general political and diplomatic history of Europe, which we have already had in newspapers and blue-books, and which we are in course of having crystallised in the works of those professed historians whose business is politics, and who employ their leisure on subjects within their

speciality. Nothing more dreary than the political history of M. Alexandre Dumas, dramatised with its startling points and dénouements; it is like reading his own *Louis XIV.* after laying down Mezeray, or possessing a coupon of Royal British Bank Stock compared with one of the Bank of England; but in the other part of his work we feel that he stands on his own ground, and that he is there indeed a master. Like an oasis after a desert journey, nothing can be more agreeable than to go out of the hazy sandy atmosphere of politics to the verdant regions of art. A new poem of Hugo, a rehearsal at the Porte St Martin or the Odéon, a squabble with the critics, a soirée of artists; all such form the pleasant parts of the book.

The life of Alexandre Dumas commenced with the century; his father, whom he lost early, had rapidly risen to the rank of lieutenant-general in the republican armies; and we find, in the early part of the son's career, a meritorious struggle on the part of both widow and orphan to make ends meet. At length the ardent genius of the son, impatient of a residence in a provincial town, invited him to try his fortunes in Paris, the mother having been compelled to sell her house and farm. His first impulse was to look up to the friends of his father—Marshal Victor, Duke of Belluno; Marshal Jourdan; and Marshal, then General, Sebastiani. He was admitted to Marshal Jourdan, who imagined that the father whom he had believed dead was paying him a visit. But he had never heard that he had a son; and, in spite of all that young Dumas could say, he was dismissed in a few minutes, without the marshal being satisfied of his identity, or disposed to commence acquaintance. But he was more successful with General Foy, the French historian of the Peninsular war, and the most impressive of the orators of the opposition in 1823. General Foy lived in the Rue Mont Blanc, and Dumas found him working at his Spanish military history. He wrote standing at one of those tables that may be raised or lowered at will. All around him, on chairs and sofas, was a heterogeneous mass of printer's proofs, maps, books, and newspapers. The general himself was a man of fifty, thin, small, with his hair growing gray, a brow like the hemisphere of a cannon-ball, an aquiline nose, and a bilious complexion. He carried his head erect, his language was brief, and his gesticulation imperious.

'Ah!' said he, 'are you the son of the General Dumas who was in the army of the Alps?' to which an affirmative answer was given, with the presentation of a letter of introduction. 'But before I can be of use to you,' said the general, 'I must first know what you are good for. Do you know anything of mathematics?—algebra?—geometry?—natural philosophy?—Latin?—Greek?—or book-keeping?' To each of these interrogatories, enounced slowly by the general, a negative answer was given—the face of the aspirant youth reddening into the deepest scarlet, and the perspiration dropping from his brow. At last the general asked for his address, with some commiseration; but scarcely had he written his name, when the general said: 'We are saved! You have a beautiful hand-writing.' Dumas was not delighted in having a copying clerkship pointed out for his destination; but General Foy continued, saying: 'I dine to-day at the Palais Royal; I will speak of you to the Duke of Orleans, and see if it is not possible to get you into his office.'

A petition was written out by the future dramatic poet. The leader of the opposition—dining with the future king of the French, in the palace built by Richelieu—spoke of the son of the republican general; and the end of it was the appointment of Alexandre Dumas to a place of L48 a year, in the office of the Duke of Orleans; for his property was so vast as to require a formal administration, like a small government department. Here the dramatist passed the first years of his residence in Paris, working during the day on

the details of the forest cuttings of Villars-Cotterets, or the rents of the Palais Royal; and at night, visiting the theatres, reading translations of Schiller and Shakspeare, and casting about for the materials of a drama of his own.

We have no space for the many droll stories which he gives of this period of his life—one of the best of which is his account of a first visit to a theatre, when he paid for a place in the *queue*, and being obstreperous upon having to pay at the bureau again, was turned out of the theatre. At this period, Dumas made the acquaintance of Frédéric Soulié, and he gives his opinion of this remarkable but unequal genius: he considers that Soulié had something obscure in his brain; his thoughts being like the world, lighted only on one side, the antipodes of the illuminated side being plunged in darkness; and that, notwithstanding the scenes of extraordinary power he has produced, he never knew how to begin or end a drama or a romance. Soulié began timidly, and exposed his action painfully, so that his fine scenes were arrived at after a disagreeable apprenticeship of the reader's or spectators' patience. He lived on a small pension which his father allowed him, in a modest apartment in the Rue de Provence, among the furniture of which was a piano, on which he used to play. Afterwards he became a man of business, engaged in a mechanical sawing establishment, and died some years ago, well off, his time divided between Apollo and Mercury.

The theatrical experiences of Dumas are the clearest portions of the memoirs. Talma was still on the stage, and its acknowledged monarch; Mademoiselle Mars was at the height of her reputation and power. We have all the quarrels of the old classical authors with the rising dramatists of the new school, who were declared to be not 'sons of France, but bastards of England and Germany.' As for Dumas's collaborations and plagiarisms, we have his share in the former stiffly argued, and the latter freely confessed. Our deliberate opinion—after having seen represented or having read his best works, as well as learned the opinion entertained of him by his Parisian colleagues—is, that he is a man of most marvellous powers of invention, of great fertility of resource, of great skill in the construction of dramas, and of great capacity for labour, in addition to natural gaiety of style and facility of production. He has not the high poetry of Lamartine or Hugo; but even if he had had no collaboration, he is still the man to have outstripped all others in abundance of effective dramas. His misfortune has been habits of prodigality, which have injured his personal fortunes and literary reputation. From the first he shewed great powers of construction and animated dialogue—the one the body, the other the soul of the drama—but unfortunately this necessity for the requisites of a profuse hospitality has compelled him, first of all, to involve himself in an extensive collaboration, and at last to lend his highly popular name to many works in which he had no hand whatever. He began with works of genius; he continued by the rearrangement of the raw materials of others with masterly skill; and at last arrived at such habits of labour as to be able to work from ten to fourteen hours a day, year after year. If we add to these enormous labours the number of works to which he lent his name without contributing a thought, his princely revenue and prodigal luxury cease to be a marvel.

Talma was the most important of his early theatrical acquaintances. This distinguished artist was born at Paris in 1766. His father was many years a celebrated dentist in London, who had among his patients the Prince of Wales, subsequently George IV.; and the *début* of the son was in 1787. From that time he retained undivided possession of the Paris stage. Talma had the four great qualities of an actor—person, expression of countenance, voice, and intellectual capacity.



Without being what the French call *un homme d'esprit* of an acute and lively conversation, he had great erudition in relation to his profession. When he was on the point of creating a part, he grudged no historical research that might throw light on the character, the transaction, or the nature of the epoch. In short, like our own Garrick, he appears to have been superior to all his predecessors and successors.

In high comedy, Mademoiselle Mars seems to have attained the same elevation. Dumas pronounces her to be an honest woman, severely exact in the fulfilment of all her agreements, and as punctual at rehearsals as a post-office clerk at his bureau. 'I beg pardon,' said she on the single occasion of her having been absent for a quarter of an hour; 'but I have just lost forty thousand francs. Vite, commençons!'

After many discussions, Dumas got his play of *Henri III.* accepted at the Théâtre Français; but his entrance into the temple of Thespis proved to be his exit from the service of the Duke of Orleans. M. de Broval, the director-general of the affairs of the Duke of Orleans, gave Dumas politely to understand that literature and bureaucracy were two enemies who could not live together, and that he must choose between them.

'I understand,' said the poet, 'that if I pursue my vocation of man of letters, I am dismissed.'

'Yes,' said the baron—whom the author, with a grudge, described as being a baron with a large red nose, and one shoulder higher than another.

'Then I decide for the career of letters,' rejoined the poet.

'And how will you support your mother?' said the baron.

'Oh, that is my affair,' added Dumas. And thus his independent career commenced.

But although no longer serving the Duke of Orleans in an economical capacity, he was by no means unwilling to have him for a literary patron. He therefore determined to ask him to be present at a representation of his piece. The future Louis-Philippe was a handsome man of fifty at that time, not so very fat as he subsequently became, with a lively, intelligent countenance, and affable manners, but which never went so far as to allow people to forget his rank, except when he had to do with some very vain member of the *bourgeoisie*, and had a point to gain. His voice was agreeable in speaking, but he had a habit in his familiar moments of humming mass-music with a false intonation.

'Ah, Monsieur Dumas,' said the Duke of Orleans, 'what good wind brings you here?'

'My desire that your royal highness should be present at the first representation of *Henri III.*'

'That is impossible,' said the duke, 'for I have to-morrow twenty or thirty people to dine with me.'

'Ah, that is easily arranged,' said the indefatigable Dumas. 'I can delay the commencement of the play for an hour, by an arrangement with the manager, and if your highness can advance your dinner for an hour, my object is gained.'

The duke consented. The proposed arrangement was entered into by the manager of the theatre; and on the evening of the performance, Dumas was congratulated in a letter from the baron with the red nose and the hump shoulder. But after a day or two, the play was forbidden, under the pretext that it was a covert allusion to Charles X. and the Duke of Orleans. However, the prohibition was removed, and the Duke of Orleans, calling Dumas into his box, said:

'You have nearly brought me into a scrape. The king sent for me yesterday, saying I am told there is a young man in your bureaux who has represented me as *Henri III.*, and you as the Duke of Guise.'

'Your highness,' said Dumas, 'could answer that this young man was no longer in your bureaux.'

'No,' said the Duke of Orleans; 'I preferred another answer, for I retain you in my service. "Sire," said I, "you are mistaken; for I do not beat my wife; the Duchess of Orleans is not unfaithful to me, and your majesty has not a more faithful subject than myself." He then added: "Come to the Palais Royal to-morrow morning; the Duchess of Orleans wishes to see you." In short, *Henri III.* laid the foundation of Dumas's literary fortunes by a signal success.

Thus launched into the world of Paris society, Dumas became a diner-out of the first lustre, and various lion-hunters sought his acquaintance. One of these was the well-known ex-director, Count Barras, who, after all the moving accidents of the earlier part of his life, saved 200,000 francs a year out of the wreck of his political fortunes, and spent his old age in giving literary dinners. He was a man of old family; and before the great rise of prices in France, this sum enabled him to live in a luxurious manner. Dumas was presented to him by Dr Cabarrus, son of the beautiful Thérèse Cabarrus, subsequently known by the name of Madame Tallien, the belle of the Directorial phase of French society, who married the Prince de Chimay for her third husband. Barras received them in his villa at Chaillot sitting in his arm-chair, which in the last years of his life he never quitted. He was then seventy-four years of age (1829), and a fine-looking old man. He wore a cap on his head, only his face and his hands giving signs of life; for from time to time he fell into a lethargy, as if he were dying. When the hour of dinner came, the folding-doors opened, and Barras was wheeled to his place at table. The dinner was sumptuous; but Barras's only part in the entertainment was to dip his bread in a plate filled with juice of the cuttings of a leg of mutton. This was the extent of his share of the feast.

The Princess de Chimay was of the party, but styled citizenship. Her husband had a familiar valet-de-chambre who stood behind him, and, as in old plays, took part in the conversation, and on one occasion tapped a general on the shoulder with the apostrophe: 'Général, je vous arrête;' and then proceeded, to the utter astonishment of the general, to correct his memory on some revolutionary fact. When Sir Walter Scott was in Paris, Barras wished to see him, and commissioned Dr Cabarrus to invite him to dinner; but Scott shook his head, and answered that in his forthcoming history of Napoleon he intended to take an unfavourable view of the character of Barras; and that if he were to dine with him, and then to abuse him, people would say, when he went back to Scotland, 'that he had thrown the dinner-plates at his head.'

Such as these, we think, present amusing glimpses of the life of a Parisian litterateur; and so we take our leave of Dumas.

#### ANT GOSSIP.

Long before the real natural history of ants was known, they did duty as models, examples, and illustrations for writers, both sacred and profane: often ignorantly, as in the ancient fable, which represented them as devoted to the science of political economy, and prefiguring the establishment of savings-banks; but always pleasantly—a pleasantness which a truer knowledge of their world and ways only augments and heightens.

Of course, every one knows how ants and bees are taken to represent the two great sects of human politicians; how republicanism is made to find its antitype in the formic community, and monarchy its exemplar in the apiarian kingdom. But concerning this same republicanism, we have a word to say, which perhaps may give a different formula to the

constitution of some of the pismires, and destroy their claim to be considered as belonging to the Rouges. Anyhow, it will be proved that their republicanism, if it exist at all, is of the Spartan and oligarchic character, and the furthest possible removed from any modern notions of socialism.

To begin with: Who, among the Red ants, are those four, or five, or eight, or ten ladies surrounded by guards and courtiers, who all reside together in the same large chamber, for all the world, like an eastern harem, solely occupied with the cares of futurity and the hopes of maternity? Wherever one of these royal ladies turns, she is received with respect and obedience; her guards, or rather her court, leap and dance before her, caressing her with their antennæ, and talking to each other about her by means of the same organs. She is the centre of their world, the cynosure of their regards; and if you separate her from them, they soon form themselves into a dense body and enclose her in the midst. If you take her away altogether, they go mad outright. Their queens had once wings. One fine day they and their mates left the ant-hill, and flew up into the air. The ants—the workers, soldiers, and nurses—all followed them as far as they could, and as long as they remained in the neighbourhood; and even after they had flown off, parties of scouts and guards scoured the country for—to them—miles round, waiting until one or more of the females should alight on the earth again; when, so soon as their feet touched the damp soil, their wings dropped off, and they were thenceforth under the care and jealous homage of the colony. As for the poor winged mates, their business in life was over. They might be entangled in spiders' webs, or fall into the ant-lion's den, or be devoured by huge feathered monsters, or lie on the ground and die of hunger—not an ant of the whole hill would stir an antenna to console or give them a mouthful of food to support them. Their work was done; their day was over; their only business now was to die as quickly as might be, and rid the world of their woes. If the luckier spouse were to die, how different the treatment she would receive! Faithful attendants would lick and brush her lifeless corpse for days and days together; and it would be hard work to console them; impossible, indeed, if there were not others to whom they might transfer their allegiance, and their love. What is all this but a gynocracy which brings to our minds the devotion of the days of chivalry—Lancelot du Lac, and all the rest of them?

Again: that lady and gentleman belonging to the White ants, carefully selected from a crowd of competitors, and kept by the community in the same kind of royal thralldom as the wingless ladies of the Red—also, like them, surrounded by guards and courtiers, and also occupied with the cares of futurity—what are they but elective monarchs, reigning on strictly constitutional principles, under the control and surveillance of their faithful commons? Then the slave-taking expeditions—when an army of Amazon or Legionary ants march out to the encampments of the Negro ants, attack, carry, and sack them, and return to their own city laden with slaves in embryo—what is this but republicanism, according to the charter of Lacedæmon?—indeed, according to the charter of a more modern republic as well, but by no means the ideal commonwealth of utopias or phalansteries. Is not the standing army, too, of some ants an institution anti-republican? and does not the violence and authority of command shewn by individuals with more brains than the rest,

to others less intelligent and more wilful, hinge on the great law of rule individual or by caste, which is never found in simple democracies, and always accompanies monarchies and oligarchies? We admit that there are arguments on the other side as well, for tribes and species differ in their national peculiarities. A party of Germans, Italians, Englishmen, and Cherokees are not more different, one from the other, than are the turf-ants and the wood-ants, the red ants and the white ants, the yellow ants and the negro ants, *cum multis aliis*. And though the rough draft of the various governments is much the same for all, yet there is a wide margin left for annotations and 'amendments.'

One of the strangest of the many strange phenomena connected with the ant-world is their battles. Two cities of the Wood ant, if situated within marching-distance of each other, must needs go to war. It is part of their existence. Fine large military roads, 'diverging from the ant-hill like so many rays from a centre,' lead out from and to each encampment. From morning to night, these roads are thickly peopled, apparently without any hostile feeling on the part of either tribe; but suddenly the war-hatchet is unburied, the pipe of peace is smoked out, and our Wood friends mutually arrange their battalions for a regular hand-to-hand fight. They do their work with such fury that the ground is covered with the dead and dying; and so engrossed are they with the sublime duty of stifling with venom or mutilating and devouring each other, that they pay no attention even to a human foot, which may come down on the wings and outposts of their armies, and scrunch the warriors' bones beneath its tread. All the time of the battle, the civic business of the two colonies goes on undisturbed; and after the fight has lasted for a certain number of days, the war-hatchet is once more buried, the warriors cease to frequent the roads that lead to the hostile encampment, and the quiet of the city is undisturbed on the right hand and on the left.

But the ant-battles are not always between two rival camps of the same tribe, nor yet always undertaken for prey and plunder when between different tribes. Sometimes two armies of different species will fight from no other apparent cause than the love of fighting. Thus, the Herculean ant, nearly half an inch long—not known in England—and the Sanguine ant, only half its size, were watched by Huber in a deadly affray, all for no visible end. The Herculeans quitted the trunk of a tree where they had lodged themselves, and marched up to the very gates of the Sanguine city. The besieged acted on the defensive, and suffered themselves to be slaughtered without mercy. After the first brush, and while the Herculeans were taking breath, they transported all their valuables, eggs, grubs, pupæ, queens, &c., to a distance of fifty feet, under cover of outposts, placed at intervals, both to guard their retreat, and to ward off any sudden attack on the city itself. And when all was completed, the return-blow was struck, in which the Herculeans had the worst of it, as they deserved. The small Sanguine might often have been overpowered by the superior weight and size of its antagonist, had not its brethren in arms come to its assistance; and amongst them all, the formic Heracleidan either perished on the battle-field, or was conducted prisoner to the camp, there to be put to a cruel death. The Sanguine had the advantage in numbers, and numbers overcame strength.

The Sanguines are among the slaveholding populations, and harry and worry the poor Negro ants out of their existence, whenever they have the chance. The Negroes resist as long as they are able; but when they have fairly lost the field, they carry off as many of their pupæ and young females as they can; some even—more courageous than our stoutest heroes—will return alone, through the very thick of the

sacking army, down to the chambers where lie the unconscious grubs and eggs, and endeavour to rescue one or more from the mandibles of the enemy. In the very beginning of the fray, they had placed as many of their treasures as they could carry in comparative safety on the covered side of the hill. Those are the treasures they are carrying off now in full and rapid retreat, the Sanguine wretches chasing them virulently. The poor Negroes take kindly enough to servitude; and when their masters return home after a foray, bringing fresh prisoners even of their own tribe, they will caress and offer the robbers food, with an utter obliviousness of patriotism, and a sad facility of chain-bearing. But it must be remembered, in mitigation of our contempt, that adult Negroes are never captured: the slave-owners are too wise for that. They take them young, indeed before they are born, and so secure themselves against inconvenient reminiscences. The Negroes are the workers, the squaws, the hewers of wood and drawers of water, the nurses and factotums of their warrior-masters; while these huge, awkward, feckless fellows, sit at the bottom of their city waiting until another spell of soldiering calls them forth. Why, they cannot even feed themselves! The Negroes have actually to feed them; and as for taking care of their eggs or grubs, or building anything like a shelter for them or for themselves, they have about as much idea of that as a new-born baby! In one experiment that was made, when warriors, pupæ, and larvæ were all thrown together into a box, where there was both earth to build with, and honey to eat, the huge helpless men-of-war roamed about and about in a wild distracted sort of way, looked at their grubs, and evidently did not know what to do with them, though all their materials were at hand. They died, some of these great creatures, and would soon have all perished in the very lap of plenty, had not the experimenter let in one tidy, industrious, canny little Negro; and this creature, alone and unassisted, built cells for the young, fed the gasping warriors, arranged and smoothed and fashioned all into order, just like a dear little Ruth Pinch as she was, in the midst of a set of awkward helpless giants. The Negroes build the city, feed the warrior-citizens, nurse the grubs, whether warrior-grubs or Negro; in short, do all the loving, careful, and intelligent work of the community, and are faithful and devoted to the death; but, like all indispensable and spoiled servants, they are dictatorial. They will not allow one of their robber-masters to leave the city alone, nor before the proper time of bloodshed and rapine has arrived; and if they return from a raid without the expected lift, the Negroes give them the cold shoulder; and, if very incensed, will not allow them to enter the city at all. If they dare to enter, dogged and sulky, the little Negroes drag them out again with a lantern that sends the crest-fallen bucaniers a-soldiering again, by their leave or without it.

Some ants keep not only Negroes, but also the eggs of the aphids, their cow, of which they take jealous and incessant care. Every one knows how an ant treats an aphid; how it goes sidling up to the fat quiet thing, and caresses her with its antennæ, till cowed, in a fit of gratitude and pleasure, gives out her drop of honey-dew, which pismire laps up—ants *lap* when they drink, something like a cat—then strolls off to milk another aphid-cow by the like means. But every one does not know that ants wrestle and play together, like a couple of boys let loose from school. Huber found out that fact, as indeed he found out most of the secrets of the ant-hill. He went one day to his formicary of wood-ants, and saw at a glance that no work was being done that day; but he saw also that they were all in a state of extraordinary excitement. A little attention shewed him his ants dancing on their hind-legs, patting each other with their antennæ, in evident invitation to come out boys and girls to

play, and playing, by seizing each other by a mandible, foot, or antenna; then wrestling with might and main, turning, closing again, hiding from each other, finding each other again; sometimes, when one was victor undoubtedly, he would attack many others in succession, overthrowing them all like nine-pins. Sometimes, too, especially the hill-ants, they amuse themselves by carrying each other pickaback, or in their mouths, as cats carry their kittens, or dogs their puppies. On graver occasions, as, for instance, if their pupæ and grubs are buried under the ruins of their invaded city, they may be seen digging them out from the wreck, and carrying them off, like the old St Bernard dogs in the pictures, all snow and babies.

But our European ants are mere nobodies compared to the great white ant of India, that terrible fellow who will eat away the legs of your table in a night, and leave you only the simulacrum of a table, a superficial outside, a mere sham, as you find to your cost if you put anything on the top. The white ant lives chiefly on wood. He will excavate a tree, living or dead, a post, a table, a book-case, a cask of wine—and let all the wine out—the beams of a house; anything, in short, made of wood, will he gnaw his way into, leaving the outside intact, so that it is only by a luckless experiment that his depredations are found out. If he eats away the supporting beams, however, of a ceiling, or of anything which, that support being withdrawn, would fall and crush him on the spot, he ingeniously repairs his damage with a kind of cement he makes out of clay and earth; so that he literally turns wooden pillars into stone, filling in with cement all he destroys in wood. They make enormous nests five or six feet high; these nests, when only half finished, are strong enough to serve as stations for the wild bulls, the leaders of the herd, from whence they can better see their subjects feeding in the plain below. The Indians eat the white ants, and uncommonly good eating they are reported to be. One gastronome said that they were like sugared marrow; another, like sugared cream and sweet almonds—similes very exciting to one's organ of gustativeness. The white ants hoard up large magazines of tree-gums for their queens and their young to eat—gums of every shade of colour and of every variety. Some white ants build their nests something like tool-stools—these are called turret-building; others build in trees; but the generality make their hill-nests, as we stated above, and construct covered-ways to wherever they want to go. So jealous are they of being seen, so modest, too, in their rapaciousness, that they will not eat in sight of day, but must needs be walled and vaulted in, like novices or odalisques. They are monstrously unpleasant neighbours—as bad as a remove or a fire for one's furniture. The carpenter ants are also exceedingly jealous of observation. They live in trees, and will not stay to be studied, not though bribes of honey or sugar be placed before their very mouths. The jet-ant is the most renowned of the carpenters; he dyes all his wood jet black, and makes a very dingy-looking city. But his carving is singularly delicate; and he constructs columns and arches, galleries, halls, and vestibules, like the best trained architect in London. The mason-ant understands the principle of the arch, as the bees know the value of the hexagonal cell. He can balance his grains and blocks without cement, so as to form a perfect vault, fashioned on correct mathematical principles.

O the grand, the interesting world that lies at our feet, and skims above our heads! O the wisdom, the intelligence, the beauty and the power, shewn in the despised insect-races, which half the world crush under their feet, or brush shudderingly away! We know of no study more full of boundless interest than the study of entomology, than the reading, in small type, the words of eternal beauty, love, and wisdom, by which



God made the world—none that we would recommend as a surer heal-all to the heart-sick and the weary, the loveless and the lovely! And the alpha of entomology we hold to be the ant-hill.

### THE GHOST-PLAY.

It would almost seem as if every man in the French army was an Alsatian, so frequent is the reply, when you ask a soldier 'from what part of France are you?' 'From Alsace.' The warlike spirit once prevailing in that province may have become second nature to the inhabitants. Being an exposed frontier, it was, in former days, continually attacked by the rivals and enemies of France, and a prey to all the adventurers disbanded by belligerent powers; consequently, it was forced to be for ever on the defensive; and apparently not having enough of fighting with foes, the peasants and their lords filled up the intervals of contention with strangers by violent quarrels of their own. We may be sure, when in steaming through the country, a picturesque ruin on an inaccessible height is seen for an instant and lost again, that all between its crumbling walls and the nearest town has been, over and over again, pillaged, ravaged, burnt, and submitted to every kind of violence from the days of Attila to those of Napoleon the Great. Every one of the pretty valleys of the Vosges has been, in its turn, the scene of a desperate battle and a bloody struggle. The amazing part of the story is, that the smallest bit of wall or cement should still remain to remind the antiquarian traveller of what has been; for there is scarcely a woody hill which is not crowned by its castle, and which does not in its depths conceal enormous heaps of ruin, telling of the extent of its dependencies. As certain as you are to see these artistic bits, so sure, also, are you to perceive, immediately beneath feudal towers, the tall chimneys of some powerful manufactory, which now bears away throughout this commercial district; and marvellous is the size of these intrusive but valuable buildings, with their long ranges of windows, and their immensely lofty walls. They are not at all picturesque, neither are the swarms of work-people, male and female, who pour from out their portals in haste to snatch a rapid meal, and return to their ceaseless occupation. Every hand in every village is employed; and whatever other complaints may be heard, want of occupation is not amongst the grievances. The proprietors of these extensive mills and manufactories are men of immense wealth; but those whose work has made them so are about as miserable, savage, and uncomfortable a looking race as one could meet. A sentimental or philosophic traveller, perceiving this, might be induced to ask the difference between the lot of the peasant, whose existence is given up to the lord of the mills of the present day, and that of the vassal whose life was devoted to the lord of yonder castle some centuries ago. Perhaps the tyrant of those towers was forced to live on his estates; but certain it is that the rich proprietor now-a-days is spending his money, gained in these valleys, in some luxurious city far away, never visiting his 'native vales' except to assure himself that the grinding of gold is prosperously going on. Not content with usurping the sites of old castles, many of the manufactories are actually wedged into the indestructible walls, effacing them with newness and completeness. They say to the strongholds of the Lothaires and Childeberts: 'Our turn is come'; and exulting wreaths of black smoke are sent sailing from huge chimneys, from the vales to the mountains, and far over the still crowding forests. The Roman conquerors, who made stations once upon a time along the line of road from Strasbourg to Basel, little contemplated the sort of stations which the railway has now strewn upon their traces.

Where once stood the strongly defended monastery of Koenigshoffen, and its protecting neighbours of Geispolzheim and Ostwald, the whole site is now occupied by a colony established by the benevolent mayor of Strasbourg, M. Schutzenberger, who, determined to utilise the very worst materials, and give a chance to the least respectable of the inhabitants of his magnificent city, has carried out his noble scheme of reformation, and has the triumph of finding his exertions entirely successful. Part of the forest which covers the range of hills was cleared, air and light were let into the landscape, the ground was drained and cultivated, and at this moment a productive district has taken the place of a mere desert. The peace and comfort now to be found in the colony of Ostwald are probably appreciated by the families of former pickpockets and housebreakers, who consented to try the experiment of the policy of honesty; for nothing can appear more respectable or well-to-do than those who carry on their occupations in the locality.

The plain at the foot of the hill, where cottages are beginning to group themselves, is the site of a desperate battle between Marlborough and Turenne; but the names of both those redoubted generals are forgotten in that of the sensible and judicious mayor of Strasbourg.

The good king Dagobert, if his spirit were permitted to revisit the spots in which he formerly delighted, would certainly be startled at the change in his monastic village of Geispolzheim, where, if he got out of the train bodily, he would lose himself in endeavouring to find his monks; and in equal amazement would the ghost of Charlemagne be, should he seek at the next station for his beloved city of Rosheim, for he would recognise little there but the beautiful tower of the church he built for his lieges. Nothing can be prettier than the position of this charming village of Rosheim, nestled at the foot of a high hill, on the summit of which stand the fine ruins of the Castle of Guirbaden. No doubt, by the name of it, there were always baths here. There is a very fine bathing establishment now, probably on the same spot where Charlemagne indulged in the luxury. It is quite worth while for a traveller, who is not in a hurry, to stop at the station and give an afternoon to the ruins, or rather to the delicious walk to them, which will repay him at every step by the fine views it gives over a most remarkable country of gorges and ravines, meandering rivers and thick woods, and chains of mountains stretching into mazy distances; to every one of whose subject heights attaches some legend, reviving the poetical climber whose breath begins to fail him, and who will always gain by packing up a little romantic lore in his head, as well as sandwiches in his basket, before he sets out on any excursion in a wild country like Alsace; for, after all, huge manufactories and gigantic chimneys, when often repeated, become as monotonous as stories of castles and of giants; therefore, it is not amiss to make sandwiches of the two classes of interest, and take them by turns during the journey.

To this Castle of Guirbaden attaches a very wild story, quite suited to the scene. It seems that in the seventeenth century, while fierce war was carried on between the Alsations and Lorrainers, the castle was betrayed into the hands of the latter by a perfidious servant of the Countess of Guirbaden. Every year, since that time, on the anniversary of the fair of Haslach—the village at the foot of the hill—a sort of expiatory ghost-play is acted in the castle ruins, which lasts a whole week. The *dramatis personæ* are the countess, the governor, the false vassal, and the men-at-arms concerned in the defence of the stronghold, and the drama is as follows: At midnight, the governor rises from his tomb in the vaults, and hurries from gallery to gallery, summoning, in a hoarse and solemn voice, his garrison to be on the alert, and arise for

vengeance. Four of these descend the stone stairs of the great tower to a vault so deeply concealed that no human eye can now discover it. Here they take up the coffin of the countess, and bear it to the great hall. They then, together with the rest of the men-at-arms and servants, arrange themselves round it in awful silence. The governor takes his seat near; he is habited in a robe without sleeves; and the cavities where his eyes should be are filled with blood. This is in memory of tortures he underwent from the Lorrainers to induce him to discover where the treasure of the countess was hidden. The traitor who betrayed the castle is then introduced, and his trial begins. He is dressed in red, and holds in his hands the huge key of the postern-gate by which he admitted the enemy. He appears to be overwhelmed with remorse and fear, and stammers forth excuses, and pleads for pardon for some moments, no interruption being offered; but when a quarter to two strikes from an invisible clock, the judges proceed to the vote, and after a period of deliberation, the governor slowly approaches the coffin of the countess, and appears to consult his dead mistress. Presently a harsh voice proceeds from the corpse; and the words 'Let him be delivered to justice' resound through the hall. This occurs exactly at the moment the bell is striking two, and at the same instant begins a terrible chase, of which the wretched culprit is the object. He utters the most piercing shrieks as he darts from the spot pursued by the governor and all his attendants. The latter rush to the outward walls of the castle, and there, taking each other's hands, they form a circle, in which they whirl madly round, hemming in the terrified criminal, accompanying their wild dance by hideous howlings and execrations, all the time the great bell of the castle tolling as loudly as if it still hung in the empty belfry, through which the stars glimmer. This commotion lasts till four o'clock, when, at the last stroke of the hour, the whole phantom-crowd suddenly disappears, everything returns to silence and repose, and the drama is ended for that night, to be repeated nightly till the week is finished, and the castle is restored to the moon and the owls for another year.

The owl, indeed, had a good deal to do with this Castle of Guirbaden, which, in times more recent than those when the real tragedy was acted which this ghost-play shadows forth, was a place of much revelry and hilarity. The guest was received by the lord of the castle with cordiality, conducted into a state-apartment, and there crowned with a certain beaver-hat, which it was his privilege to wear all the time he remained. After this, he was invited and expected to drink to the last drop the contents of a huge cup, made in the form of an owl, in honour of his entertainer; and according as he succeeded with facility or otherwise, rose his fame amongst the jovial company of the Castle of Guirbaden.

#### PREVENTION OF CASUALTIES ON GOODWIN SANDS.

Along the narrowest part of the English Channel, off the Kentish coast, is a quicksand about twenty miles long, and several miles broad. On the edge of this abyss, at long intervals, are some scattered lights; but, during hazy weather, confounded with numerous other beacons, these are worse than useless, while in storms they disappear altogether. This abyss is the famous Goodwin, where some noble ship, with her whole crew, is every now and then engulfed. A more efficient, but very simple protection has been devised by Mr George Chowen; consisting of a double line of buoys, each furnished with a large sonorous bell, placed round the entire area, the outer line two miles from the quicksand; the inner, a quarter of a mile nearer; and the buoys 100 yards apart. On the coast-side, one line would suffice, with the buoys 300 yards apart. In stormy weather, the bells would be set in

motion by the sea; and in an absolute calm, so far as steamers are concerned, the paddles would serve to draw forth the warning voice.

#### EN AVANT!

HEAVY and thick the atmosphere,  
The prospect narrow, dark, severe—  
Yet a few steps the path is clear,  
For those few steps, march on!

Dark rocks that frown as if in wrath,  
Like giants ranged across the path—  
Be sure the gorge some outlet hath,  
So trustfully march on!

A deep wide stream that shines like glass,  
Flanked by steep banks of slippery grass—  
There is some bridge by which to pass,  
So watchfully march on!

A tempest rattling in the wind,  
The sun in thunder-robes enshrined—  
Doubt not some shelter soon to find,  
Still hopefully march on!

The day goes out—the fog upcrows,  
Darkness the face of heaven enshrouds—  
A voice shall guide thee through the clouds,  
So patiently march on!

If Duty set you on the way,  
You need not fear—you must not stay;  
Still faithfully her word obey,  
Still loyally march on!

Let but your aims be high and true,  
Your spirit firm, but patient too,  
A Titan's strength shall go with you,  
Still fearlessly march on!

M. H.

#### 'CAPTAIN DODD AT SEA.'

Since the article under this title in No. 173 was printed, the writer's attention has been drawn to certain documents contained in the appendix to Señor Navarrete's *History of the Four Voyages of Columbus*, and which are vouched by the historian to be authentic extracts from the series of Spanish records preserved at Simancas. They narrate that, in the months of May and June 1543, Blasco de Garay, a naval captain in the service of the Emperor Charles V., conducted at Barcelona a series of experiments upon the applicability to ships of a certain propulsive force which he alleged himself to have discovered; that the mechanism which he employed consisted of two wheels, one attached to either extremity of a movable axis which traversed the vessel's waist, and was connected in a peculiar manner with a large caldron of boiling-water; that the experiments were conducted in the presence of several persons of high birth deputed by the emperor to witness them, of many naval commanders, and of 'a crowd of curious persons capable of appreciating the discovery;' that on the seventeenth of the aforesaid month of June, De Garay succeeded in taking to sea a vessel of two hundred tons burden; that she was propelled neither by sail nor oar; and that her rate of speed was about a league an hour. On the authenticity of these documents, strong doubts were cast by the late M. Arago, in the *Annuaire du Bureau des Longitudes* for 1828. Whether it was ever successfully vindicated, the present writer has been unable to learn: but if the documents be genuine, as, from Señor Navarrete's character, is not improbable, there can be no doubt that De Garay had actually solved an important physical problem, and was the first to venture to sea in a ship propelled by the agency of steam.

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